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EAST EUROPE BRANCH NOTES

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POLAND

Currying Favor

During his recent sweep through India and Bangladesh (March 11-18), Foreign Minister Olszowski spread, with some success, the message that socialist Poland is a friend of the weak and forlorn. In both New Delhi and Dacca, he hobnobbed with the political elite, spoke to their concerns, talked up increased trade and aid, and signed pre-arranged scientific-technical agreements. He also boosted the Soviet's projected Asian Collective Security Arrangement, accused Peking of being anti-detente, called for UN acceptance of Bangladesh, and secured Prime Minister Gandhi's promise to visit Poland. In sum, Olszowski accomplished little spectacular, but he did plant some seeds in hopes of a later harvest.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Ghoulish Work by the KGB

[redacted] have informed the US Embassy in Prague that the ashes of Josef Smrkovsky, President of the Federal Assembly in the Dubcek period, were stolen after interment. Smrkovsky died on January 15 and, following cremation, his ashes were interred in an unmarked family plot in Prague on February 28. Police later informed the family that the tomb had been broken into, and the urn was then found in the men's room of a train station near the Austrian border. The Embassy believes that this was a KGB operation intended to make it appear that someone was trying to spirit Smrkovsky's ashes out of the country for burial in exile abroad.

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State Dept. review completed

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YUGOSLAVIA

Yugoslavs React to Albanian Rhetoric

The Yugoslavs ended their two-and-a half year hiatus in polemics with Albania last week, when the Macedonian daily Nova Makendonia chastised an Albanian journal for publishing "crude attacks" on the Yugoslav party. The restrained tone of the response suggests that the Yugoslavs would prefer to keep polemics with Tirana at a low-level, especially in light of Belgrade's current problems with Rome and Sofia.

In celebrating the publication of the 16th book by Albanian party chief Hoxha, Druga e Partise, the Albanian party monthly, restated Tirana's case against Yugoslav "revisionists," including the old charge that Belgrade once tried to incorporate Albania into Yugoslavia.

In response, Nova Makendonia noted that this regression does not correspond with the Albanian party's currently stated policies of cooperating with Yugoslavia. The author further asserts that this "strike into the void" would "usually" be called interference into the internal affairs of others.

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